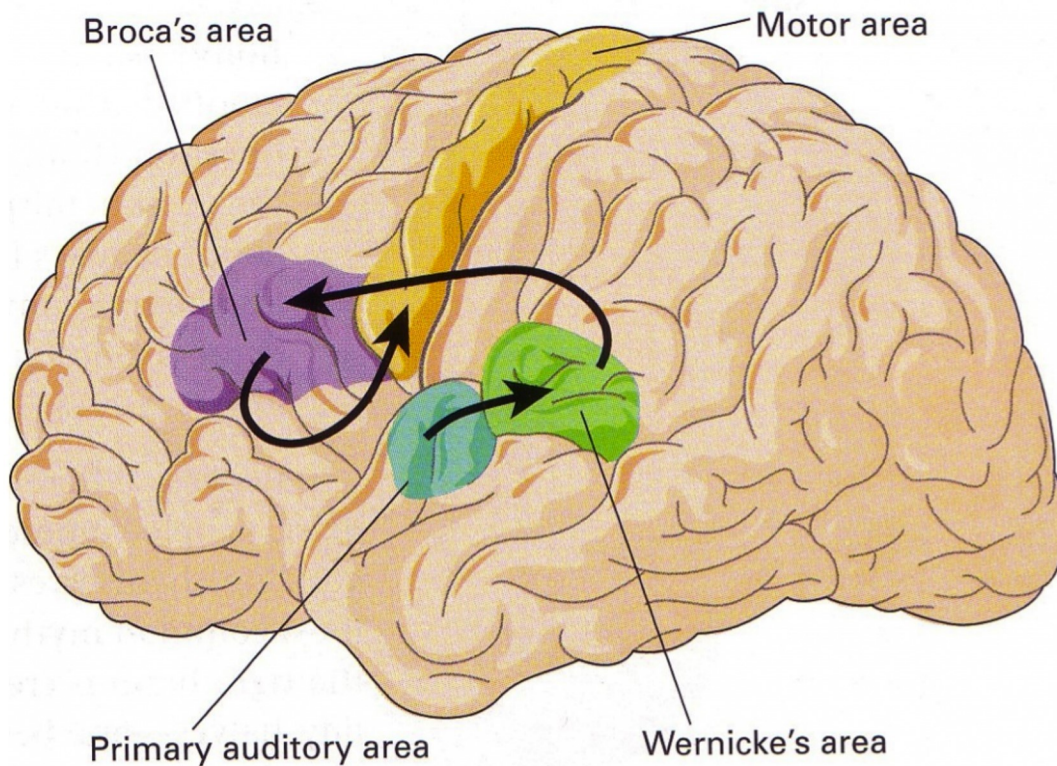


A DYSLEXIC LEARNS TO READ BY POWERLIFTING



Charlie Marino

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Charlie Marino
Erudite First Editions

Author's Note

This method chronicles an experiment done between two men. One is a nuclear engineer with a ridiculously large vocabulary, and the other a 37-year-old dyslexic – pushed out of high school - who never read a book in his life.

“Do not act as if you had 10,000 years to throw away. Death stands at your elbow. Be good for something while you live and it is in your power.” Marcus Aurelius

I say this to you, who are reading this with someone who cannot read, or not read well.

Try

A Dyslexic Learns to Read by Powerlifting

How Even Dyslexics Can Learn to Read English

The number of poor readers in the United States is alarming. I'm not referring to those who simply read one novel per year – if that many – or to those in the black, Hispanic, or foreign communities here, although they are included. As a nation, we simply do not value reading. And for many who say they do value it, mere lip service is kept at the minimum effort level.

Easy for a nation like this to fall into fascism or religious theocracy where all your thinking is done for you.

Reading puts you inside the head of the writer. Inside another human mind, without recourse to quick smart remarks or condescension. You take it, or you leave it. Truly an American ideal until this century.

I was actually told by an eight-year-old black girl when she saw me carrying home a load of books from an auction that “Only losers read.” And the other half dozen children around her, younger and older, white and black, did not disagree.

It confirms for me that our status as a high-tech country and world leader is based on the actions of very few, a percentage I have been recalculating over the years to be smaller and smaller. This century it feels like no more than 1% of the population. The rest click their smartphone apps and can flip a switch for an electric light, but not 1 in 100 can tell you how either works. Or can tell a lie from a veil. Sad. Time for an Atlas Shrugged moment perhaps? Read that!

For those few who

- (a) Do not read or read well

- (b) Want to

...this volume is dedicated. I know it works for the following reason:

I am the scientist who did it.

Upon being released from federal custody (charges dropped, no felony, don't ask) I was under probate observation by the authorities who knew but could not prove anything about me. As part of that oversight, a psychologist doing my periodic interviews knew two things:

- (a) I could mentally run circles around her, MMPI tests notwithstanding

(b) I could help her (and get a quicker release from surveillance) if I helped one of her other releases.

The man was a 37-year-old factory worker, dyslexic, intelligent, who had gotten by in life by faking an ability to read whole sentences. He had few academic achievements, in fact, barely got through high school, but via hard work and finding a good woman at his side was offered a supervisor position at the factory. Much higher pay and a benefits package.

He was terrified.

Supervisors not only had to read the safety signs posted around the facility but also put up new ones & explain them to the workers. Not to mention a ton of paperwork related to invoices, shipping manifests, union regulations, OSHA regulations, etc. He needed help and fast.

The psychologist put us together in one of those rare moments of need meeting opportunity, as I had been conversing with her during our 'sessions' about recent advances in robotics concerning languages. My hobby. The light bulb went off and so did I: to study this man's mind to understand my robots better. I've since written several sci-fi novels on them waking up and there's a little of him in there. Thanks again, buddy, wherever you are. Big hug to your girl.

So I thought and I read of the hopelessness of dyslexic reading via conventional instruction. I knew the American school system had totally failed him from a simple test I gave him using a local newspaper. So I thought some more and began a 5-month program with him, 2-3 times a week, 1 hour or so each. He was told to repeat our sessions on the days we were not together.

So here it is.

The mistake that most poor readers make is that they already understand the basics of reading. Maybe they do. It is *irrelevant*. The only thing that matters – for these kinds of students - is physically training the brain. Understanding advanced concepts needs intellect, but reading needs brain muscle. Synapse strengthening and neural pathway thickening.

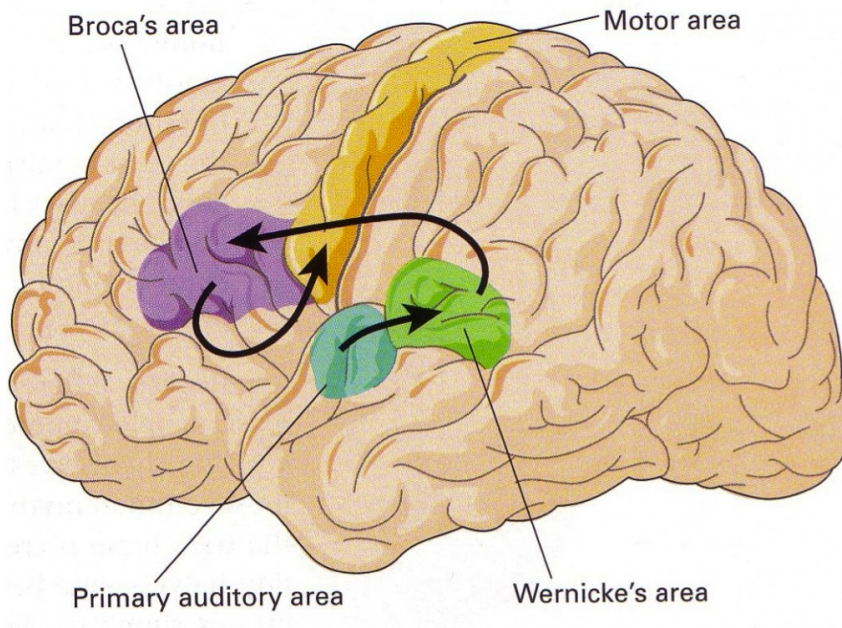
Using the analogy of weightlifting, which my student inspired by his extremely well-developed physique, I called my method 'Powerlifting'. He liked it. Just as with weights, every idiot knows you do calisthenics and warm up before lifting, even if it's a few pushups or running in place. And you never lift so much that you pull a muscle. There are gym memberships unused around the country as I speak from idiots who thought they should be able to lift more safely than they can, and now sit at home with a pulled this or stretched that, membership gathering dust. Idiots.

But the analogy was immediately understood.

Your brain is not born knowing how to speak or read. The ability is there, but not Mandarin Chinese or Swahili. And just like your muscles, the neural pathways in your brain thicken with use. Thinking in specific areas becomes easier and easier. Including the Broca/Wernicke areas of

speech and understanding language on the left side of the head. This technique would even improve people physically damaged in those areas, for the brain has a wonderful ability to rewire other areas to take over. Marvelous.

But only if you push. Powerlifting.



So here is the schedule. Different circumstances and injuries or raw intelligence may argue to different time parameters, but make no mistake: DO ALL THE STEPS. I don't care if you think you know the alphabet and the basics. You are a lump of baby brain material to me and this training will fill in whatever **gaps in your strength** that are causing you/him/her to be a poor reader. A slow reader. A reader who can't finish one chapter in a book without falling asleep. One who sees the letters but has trouble making words from them. One who sees the words but fails to internalize the knowledge. Yeah, that one too!

A word on being smart and dyslexia

For myself, I suffered with nearsightedness as a child. Could read, but not see the blackboard. Glasses were the easy solution. Picture a billiard ball - a lens laid on one side will focus light onto the other side in a perfect cone, like when kids burn ants or paper with a magnifying glass. If the eyeball is shaped a little too oval, the focal point will be inside the eye, or past the outer wall.

It had nothing to do with my intelligence.

For dyslexics and others with numerous reasons they suffer while reading, part of the wiring from the eye to inside the brain which forms images is the cause. The parts and wiring of the brain which determine how smart you are reside in different areas of the brain. Not there!

It has nothing to do with your intelligence.

Week 1 - 2 stretching & warmup

Materials: *Cost = cheap*

- small blackboard (4" x 6"), chalk, and eraser
- a notebook with lined pages. No loose leaf – the pages must be permanent.
- 4 packs of children's flashcards: 1 letters, 1 numbers, 1 colors, 1 shapes
- highlighters & black ballpoint pens (no pencils)



I advocate ballpoint pens, not pencils, to make your errors stand out. Errors are your friends and make you better like your finger on a hot stove. Learn from them.

For an entire week, 2-3 days per week, we spent an hour doing the following –

I printed one simple long sentence from a newspaper onto a single sheet of paper using 5 different fonts: Times New Roman, Courier New, Ariel, Cambria, and Garamond. It doesn't matter which fonts, just make them different so his/her brain sees the letters and words *slightly* different in each sentence. I read it out loud once, then had him read the first version out loud as well, then read and say the other 4 versions *to himself* – not out loud. This only takes seconds but gets their brain's attention on words and letters.

The rest of the hour was spent just going over the recognition of letters of the alphabet, colors, numbers, and shapes using flash cards. **No reading practice.** Had him say a letter and number flashed at him on the cards, then he wrote it down on the blackboard, then said it again out loud. Did this for every letter A – Z. Did the same thing with the cards of numbers, then colors, then shapes. With the colors and shapes, I wrote the color on the blackboard myself, said it out loud, and made *him read it to himself – not out loud*. Same for the shapes.

Then I mixed up the A-Z letters order and did it again. Same for numbers. One-hour sessions, doing it himself on the days I wasn't there.

Not silly, not trivial. It exercises parts of the brain that are soft like unused muscles. Just do it!

By the end of 2 weeks of doing this 5 days a week for 1 hour, you will be warmed up and **ready to work** out. Your synapses will be flowing with blood. Under-used areas of the brain (if

undamaged) will have neural activity. And if there is damage (*whether you know it or not!*), the brain ***will assign the above activities to another undamaged area.***

Brains want to work.

Week 3 - 6 workout

For the entire week, continue reading the sheet with a new sentence written in 5 fonts, then run through the flashcards as before but only once. In addition, the rest of the hour or so will be used as follows:

I created a list of the 350 most common words in the English language (see Appendix A).

Printed it out.

Every day, we read a set of 5-10 words together, depending on his endurance:

- I read a word. He read the word.
- Not looking, but looking at him I said the word, he said the word.
- Looking again at the word, I had him copy the word onto the blackboard, *saying it ONLY in his head*.
- I read the word out loud again looking at it on the blackboard. Then he did.

When a word was a big one, I had him work out the sound of the word from the letters. I *never* asked him to memorize specific rules, like “i before e except after c” or knowing when the “e” at the end of a word was silent. I just had him go afterward, one at a time, translating what his eyes saw into sound *coming out of his mouth* or spoken with his *inner voice in his head*. It works.

By now neural pathways will not only be assigned a job they have neglected or never started but will begin to thicken. Just like with muscles, thicker is better. Stronger. Faster. Unlike many reading programs (which fail dyslexics, as you may well know), we do not measure speed or strength. *No testing*. We are just working out and letting the growth in ability take care of itself. Thicken the neural pathways.

They will.

Week 7 – 14 Powerlifting

No more reading the same sentence 5 times. You will still do the Week 1-2 flashcards, but only **1 quick set and stop**. You will do the Week 3-6 workout too but only 1 quick set of 5 new words. The rest of the hour to hour and a half will be spent as follows.

I began having him read a short article in the local newspaper. Had him do it silently first, highlighting any word he had trouble recognizing. He highlighted half the words on the page! Then had him read out loud **and backward** so he couldn't easily guess the next word (faking it from context). He was smart enough to get the idea of a sentence or paragraph from the context of the other words, so I did not let him!

Every time he stumbled, I told him the word and made him say it too. We sounded out the hard words from the various sounds each letter makes. No rules to memorize. Just letters and sounds into specific words.

We then powerlifted the hardest 5 words for him from each article **into his notebook**:

- I read the word. He read the word.
- Not looking, I said the word, he said the word.
- Looking again, I had him copy the word into his notebook, saying it ONLY in his head.
- I read the word out loud again as he looked at it in the notebook. Then he did.

Next session, a different article. Highlight on his own. Then read with me backward. Finish with powerlifting 5 problem words.

This sequence will fix the identification of words into your brain. 300 – 400 words is a robot or a small child's vocabulary if you will. Without this foundation, reading cannot be achieved except for the gifted like myself, and you would not need this help if you were gifted except after injury. Even if the latter was the case, DO NOT JUMP AHEAD to the next set of workouts as your synapses will still be tender, though growing in strength and speed with every passing day.

You may even see your sleep cycle altered by dreams, which are nature's way of processing new knowledge into long and short-term storage. Let her!

Week 15 – 20 reading

At this point, we drop the first set of exercises, the flash cards. He was getting confident by then and was surprised when some of the early words he took for granted were still hard!

We continued, however, to increase the vocabulary through powerlifting and now go forwards into sets of 5 words each day from the full 850-1200 vocabulary (ask the internet!) required for any human in any language to converse with another human on daily affairs. I picked 5 new words, and he powerlifted them. We even returned to the original set of 350 words to reinforce them.

Now, though, I would give him each set of 5 as a collection of *type of word*:

5 verbs, then next day 5 nouns, then 5 adjectives, 5 adverbs,

5 prepositions, 5 pronouns, and 5 conjunctions & contractions

Then in addition did the following:

Instead of the newspaper, we began reading children's stories together. Finally books!

Picture books. Very simple, basic vocabulary. I had 7 different picture books. Animals. Going shopping. Visiting your family. Going to school. Use anything. As long as there is a picture of what each sentence or story was about on each page. It helps the brain by association. Pick the ones you think they would have liked at that age.

3 kindergarten & first-grade books, 2-second grade, 2 third grade. Like these:

Highlights Hidden Pictures The Noon Balloon Rhymes & Story

The Little Blue Truck My Visit To The Zoo Kids Favorite Jokes

Cat In The Hat Curious George any Dr. Zeuss

Then a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth-grade story without pictures. We only got to read the start of each 4th to 6th book, but he could continue at home on his own & read the whole thing! In his own time. For the authors below, there are simplified children's versions = perfect!

Robert Stevenson

Mark Twain

Greek Philosophers

As before, any word he had trouble with in a sentence, *we powerlifted* as he wrote it into his notebook.

- I read the word. He read the word.

- Not looking, I said the word, he said the word.

- Looking again, I had him copy the word into his notebook, saying it ONLY in his head.
- I read the word out loud again looking at it in the notebook. Then he did.

During his last 2 weeks, I showed him the hard words we were powerlifting *in a dictionary*. He understood its use immediately and would look up words at home that he read in story books or a newspaper when he wasn't sure. He had intelligent questions which I always took time to answer. He had irrelevant questions, which I also answered the best I could. Never turn away a child's questions – and the newly formed connections in his brain are those of a child.

Patience.

We laughed that sometimes he had to look up the words of the words of the words in the dictionary!

His neural connections in the brain were now thick enough to stand grammar. Until they were this strong, trying to teach him grammar or sentence structure first would have been useless and frustrating. And now that his eyes correctly fed information into his brain about letters being words, and words being verbs, nouns, etc, associated with pictures or actions in his mind, he would understand them as well.

For those of you who do not have a friend or lover with the patience to help you with this, there are many FREE internet pages containing sets of flashcards with the most common words in English. Some even include pictures. Internet robots have infinite patience. Modify this approach as fits your life, but push. You can't see your brain connecting tissue grow like you can your muscles, but it does. It will. **Find the holes** in your knowledge. Find the weaknesses. Dyslexia is where letters in a word are mixed. Mathlexia with swapping numbers. Trouble sounding out letters out loud to get the word. Comprehension of sentences. Whatever the weakness, remember that your brain wants to learn and will if you just get out of the way.

When you have a good session, remember to reward yourself. Just a little thing. Maybe a game of darts. Maybe food. Mine when I sat on my mom's lap pre-kindergarten and she read stories to me far too advanced for my age (so they said) was a glass of milk with Mallowmars or Oreos or Fig Newtons.

I came to love reading early on. You will too, at any age.

CONCLUSION

Jim never quit. He had the patience to be a kid again & re-train his brain.

At the end of 5 months, my dyslexic student was reading. At a 4th-grade to 6th grade level, but reading a newspaper. And at work, as new words were required to be part of his daily vocabulary, he knew what to do. No more panic. No fear.

After work, he went home and powerlifted them.

A set of no more than 5 of them at a time, until he *had* them. Then went out looking for more the next day. He was never stupid. Jim became a monster hungry for knowledge, and proud of it.

And I proud of him. Jim never gave up or *felt any of it was beneath him*. That's why he won.

In our last session, I presented him with a certificate, in color and embossed, declaring him to be a reader. His girl to whom he now reads in bed almost nightly (what a woman she must be), put the certificate on the refrigerator for a month as people do for their kids before finding a nice frame for it. Pride all around.

I like this method. To me, trying to teach how to read this way is like teaching sports by first building up your muscle strength. No sports at all. Later, teach them the game. Why teach them baseball when their hands are too weak to catch or throw the ball? Very frustrating.

In our talks at the end, I explained to him part of my view of humanity, which is not overly warm and fuzzy. Countries are filled with armies with big guns and big muscles, but the real power comes to the man or woman who commands. Who has that knowledge. And make no mistake, knowledge is power. That's why voting is so hard to do well. Without knowledge, people are easily led like cattle to agree with the most unimaginable things.

Knowledge. How to lead, to control, to influence. How to bully or reward, how to inspire or intimidate. It doesn't matter whether you use your knowledge for good or evil, the principle is the same. Power wins. And a source of that knowledge exists in books. In safety signs at factories. In operating instructions for machinery. Invoices, contracts, business agreements, in treaties between nations. In the instructions on putting together a child's bicycle.

And in the works of Machiavelli and Nietzsche and Stalin and in Bibles if you like.

It's up to you what you do with it, and what you need it for, but you will find power in the written word, from prescription drug instructions and Medicare rules, to how to rewire your home, fix your car, or garden. There is a book somewhere with your name on it.

Go find it.

Appendix A

350 MOST COMMON USED WORDS IN ENGLISH

The first 25 words most used in English make up about one-third of all printed material in English, and the first 100 words make up about half of all written English. We only made a dent in the list of 1200 words for language competency during his training, but by then he knew most of the 350 plus a lot more. Remember, these 350 words below *must be known cold*.

‘X’ each one when it is written into your notebook.

1	a	21	are	41	big	61	complete	81	eat
2	able	22	aren't	42	book	62	could	82	end
3	about	23	around	43	both	63	country	83	enjoy
4	above	24	as	44	boy	64	cry	84	enough
5	add	25	ask	45	business	65	cut	85	even
6	after	26	at	46	but	66	day	86	every
7	again	27	attach	47	by	67	determine	87	example
8	air	28	away	48	cable	68	did	88	explain
9	all	29	back	49	call	69	different	89	eye
10	almost	30	bad	50	came	70	do	90	face
11	along	31	be	51	can	71	does	91	fall
12	also	32	because	52	can't	72	doesn't	92	family
13	always	33	been	53	car	73	don't	93	far
14	America	34	before	54	carry	74	don't	94	father
15	an	35	began	55	certain	75	down	95	feel
16	and	36	begin	56	change	76	drill	96	feet
17	animal	37	being	57	children	77	each	97	few
18	another	38	belong	58	city	78	early	98	find
19	answer	39	below	59	close	79	earth	99	first
20	any	40	between	60	come	80	easy	100	follow
101	food	121	hard	141	in	161	learn	181	may

102	for	122	has	142	Indian	162	learn	182	me
103	form	123	have	143	inform	163	leave	183	mean
104	found	124	haven't	144	insert	164	left	184	men
105	four	125	he	145	internet	165	let	185	might
106	from	126	head	146	into	166	letter	186	mile
107	get	127	hear	147	is	167	life	187	miss
108	girl	128	help	148	it	168	light	188	more
109	give	129	her	149	it's	169	like	189	most
110	go	130	here	150	it's	170	line	190	mother
111	good	131	high	151	its	171	list	191	mountain
112	got	132	him	152	just	172	little	192	move
113	great	133	his	153	keep	173	live	193	much
114	ground	134	home	154	kind	174	long	194	must
115	group	135	house	155	know	175	look	195	my
116	grow	136	how	156	land	176	made	196	nail
117	had	137	I	157	large	177	make	197	name
118	hammer	138	idea	158	last	178	man	198	nature
119	hand	139	if	159	later	179	many	199	near
120	happen	140	important	160	laugh	180	matter	200	need

201	never	221	order	241	right	261	should	281	take
202	new	222	other	242	river	262	shouldn't	282	talk
203	next	223	our	243	robot	263	show	283	tell
204	night	224	out	244	run	264	side	284	than
205	no	225	over	245	said	265	small	285	that
206	not	226	own	246	same	266	so	286	the
207	now	227	page	247	saw	267	some	287	their
208	number	228	paper	248	say	268	something	288	them
209	of	229	part	249	school	269	sometimes	289	then
210	off	230	people	250	screen	270	song	290	there
211	often	231	picture	251	screw	271	soon	291	these
212	oil	232	place	252	screwdriver	272	sound	292	they
213	old	233	plant	253	sea	273	spell	293	thing
214	on	234	play	254	seat	274	start	294	think
215	once	235	point	255	second	275	state	295	this
216	one	236	public	256	see	276	still	296	those
217	online	237	public	257	seem	277	stop	297	thought
218	only	238	put	258	sentence	278	story	298	three
219	open	239	read	259	set	279	study	299	through
220	or	240	really	260	she	280	such	300	time

301	tire	321	wasn't	341	word
302	to	322	watch	342	work
303	together	323	water	343	world
304	too	324	way	344	would
305	took	325	we	345	wouldn't
306	tree	326	well	346	write
307	trunk	327	went	347	year
308	try	328	were	348	you
309	turn	329	what	349	young
310	tv	330	when	350	your
311	two	331	where		
312	under	332	which		
313	until	333	while		
314	up	334	white		
315	us	335	who		
316	use	336	why		
317	very	337	will		
318	walk	338	with		
319	want	339	without		
320	was	340	won't		

Remember, these 350 words

must be known cold

After You Become A Powerlifter and Can Read

From not reading at all, finishing this method will not make you read as well as a college English professor. Who does? But you are now ready to enter and succeed in a larger world. Maybe you can do it in two months. Maybe one.

Continue to Powerlift and you will just keep getting stronger!

The following resources, techniques, and teaching aids are recommended by teachers and doctors. Once you can read by Powerlifting, these techniques will find fertile ground in your mind. Water and fertilize the ground with Powerlifting before you plant these crops, and watch your reading power grow!

"Overcoming Dyslexia" by Sally Shaywitz

"How To Teach Your Dyslexic Child To Read: A Proven Method for Parents and Teachers" by B.H. Baumer and Bernice H. Baumer. 1998

"Climbing The Ladder of Reading & Writing: Meeting the Needs of ALL Learners | Professional Development Book" by Nancy Young (Author), Jan Hasbrouck. 2024

YOUTUBE VIDEO: "How To Teach a Dyslexic Child To Read At Home, With Fast Results", by Mary at Teach Kids At Home. 2020

YOUTUBE VIDEO: "How to Teach Kids With Dyslexia to Read" [Quick Watch] | by the Child Mind Institute

WIKIHOW: "How to Teach a Dyslexic Child to Read", Co-authored by Soren Rosier, PhD. 2022

<https://study.com> "reading-activities-for-dyslexic-students"

"The Dyslexia Empowerment Plan: A Blueprint for Renewing Your Child's Confidence and Love of Learning" by Ben Foss

About the author

Charles J Marino was born in the Bronx and holds a BS and MS in nuclear engineering from Columbia University. His various occupations include as a federal employee & consultant, commodity trading on Wall Street, founding several small computer companies, portfolio manager, and as a published author. He has more robots than friends, but they're good ones.

Now that there is a new reader among us, there is a chance they are fans of science fiction. If so, please give a try to my collection of short sci-fi stories, "SCIENCE FICTION ANTHOLOGY"

Or for a free preview of my novels, read the first chapters on www.Archive.org in

"The Science Fiction of Charlie Marino.pdf" Also comes in plain text.

You can also get a copy free by joining my mailing list for announcements of new novels at senior9robot@gmail.com